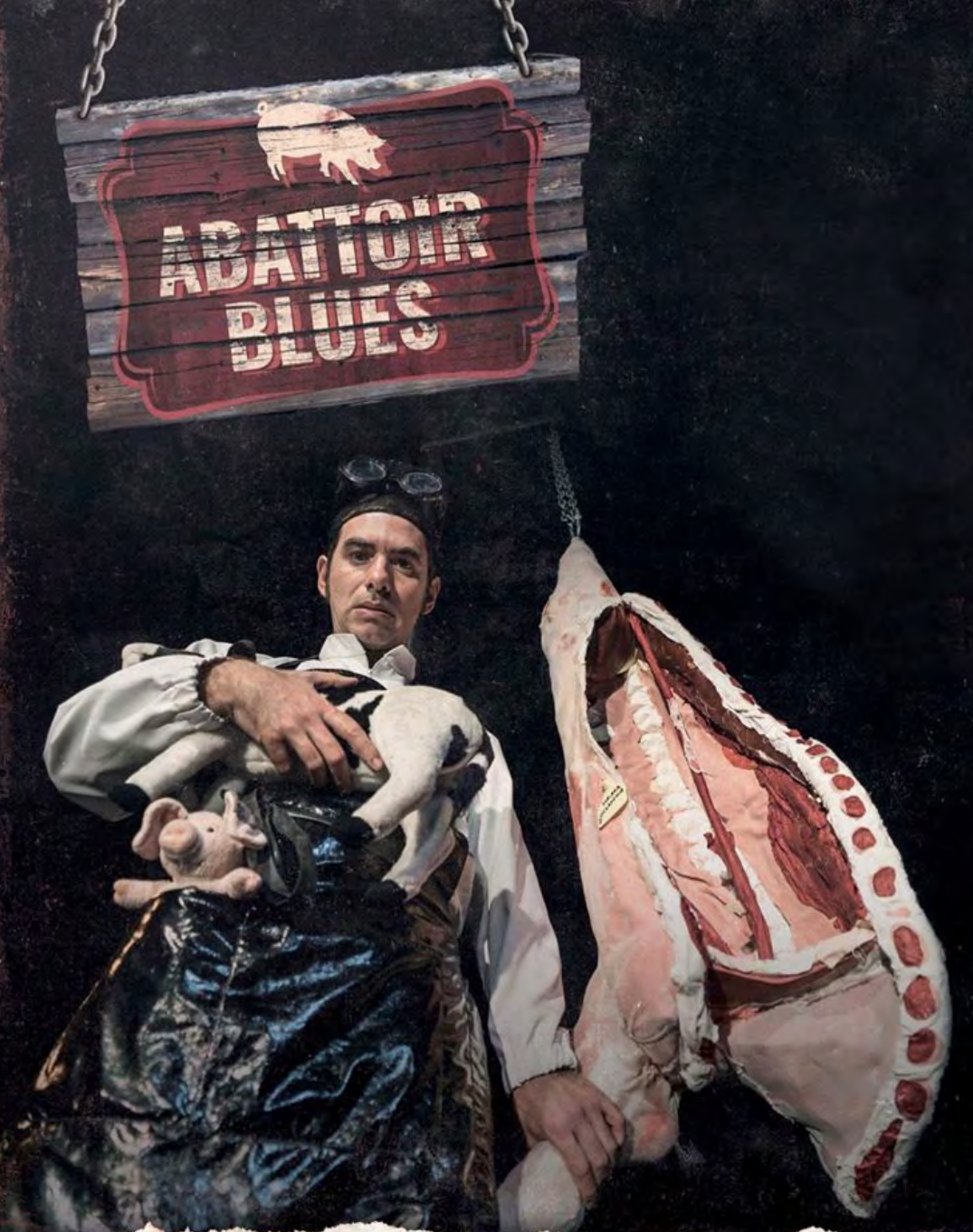


# Abattoir Blues

SATIRICAL VISUAL COMEDY

Clownery, Puppetry, Circus, Magic!





Written and interpreted by  
Luigi Ciotta

Directed by  
Adrian Schvarzstein

Art Direction  
Francesco Sgrò

Set design  
Yasmin Pochat e Augusta Tibaldeschi

Costumes  
Roberta Vacchetta

Lights and Sound  
Luca Carbone

Winnig Project "Orango Bando 2018"  
COOPERATIVA ITALIANA ARTISTI - Italy

Prize Emilio Vassalli 2019  
FESTIVAL CIRCONFERENCE - Italy

*Abattoir Blues* is the third part of the *Trilogy of Abundance*. After focusing on food waste (*Funky Pudding* - 2009) and sugar addiction (*Sweet Dreams* - 2014), Luigi Ciotta turns to another hot topic of our times: the mistreatment of animals in intensive farming and our society's ambivalent relationship with meat, which is progressively becoming more and more charged with new taboos.

## **"WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU HAD FUN SEEING ANIMALS AT THE SLAUGHTERHOUSE?"**

Once again, the aim is not pointing the finger at meat-eaters or any-one else. The subject matter here is mankind in general, and the contradictions and weaknesses that burden our attempts to deal with our primal feelings and our beastly nature, here represented under the guise of our relationship with animals.



# CIRCUS OR SLAUGHTERHOUSE?

In *Abattoir Blues* a different destiny is in store for each animal.

Before being slaughtered, for instance, a pig becomes a fakir, or is chopped into pieces to then be put back together inside a box, as in a classical magic trick. A rabbit reappears from a hat to escape its doom, while an overweight hen vanishes from a cage too small to contain it. A group of chickens performs an acrobatic act on the trapeze before being hung to a hook and offered up to the audience with the label "already plucked", while animal innards made up of ropes and knots become alive in a series of increasingly sophisticated illusion acts. A sheep will be played as a bagpipe and a half-beef hanging on a pole will become a partner for an acrobatic Tango scene.



# INTO THE DEEP

The vehicle, crammed with fake animals, enters the scene driven by the protagonist and unveils a colorful world of puppets in the shape of pigs, hens, sheep, cows, rabbits and geese, divided by laces, cages, fences and aviaries. The reference is also to human trafficking, a grueling phenomenon that keeps happening in today's world: the symbolic parallelism thus captures the "commodification of flesh" in its most basic aspect. By mimicking the boats crammed with migrants that sail the Mediterranean sea, this wagon could also be seen as a "contemporary" Noah's Ark; ironically, however, it will not bring these animals to safety, but will condemn them all to the slaughterhouse, one by one as in a Russian roulette game. Although the actions staged are raw and violent, the show is constantly played on the language of contrast: the fiercest and most savage of gestures are also somehow delicate and light, and the sense of touch is at the centre of the performance.

The show's protagonist is a common worker, a typical slaughterhouse attendant in overalls and rubber boots. He is a lonely person with borderline traits who spends his whole life surrounded by animals of all sorts, both alive and dead. His job is alienating and repetitive; its unbearable tension with life, which it constantly suspends between harshness and death, is well expressed by the choreography of movement and the juggling. In this surreal atmosphere, killing an animal becomes a poetic gesture that allows escaping the torture of being oneself and its alienating routine.

To the protagonist, ultimately, everything is animal: everything is flesh that can be slaughtered. The animals, both alive and dead, are the only counterparts to the protagonist's doing; it is to them that he relates at all times, in a projection game where victims and oppressor have their roles progressively reversed.





*Abattoir Blues* does not aim at passing a judgment on the character and his actions: all his deeds stem purely from his survival instinct, and are nothing but a relentless dance of acts that his craftsmanship requires. Victim and executioner at the same time, fate will not spare him either, forced almost to self-slaughter by rolling up on himself around a pole dance pole, wriggling in acrobatic numbers of all sorts to escape his destiny: that of becoming an anonymous piece of meat.

**What is the price of human flesh?**

This dramatic and ridiculous image recalls the kebab, a contemporary symbol of the extraordinary success of meat in industrialized society, available in abundance and at all times. The spinning on oneself at the pole will turn into a Sufi dance at the end (with a Dervish-style skirt, but which recalls the flesh) that will sublimate the materiality and cruelty of the issues addressed in a poetic and alienating way.

All of it in a comical, grotesque and surreal tone, according to the rules of buffoonery and clownery!

The show is a mixture of theatre, puppetry, circus, physical theatre and comedy in which words give way to sounds, verses and noises, both live and recorded.

The visual component has a strong impact and influences the dramaturgy and the scenography. The show will revolve around a chaotic cattle transport wagon (with numerous farm animals made of plastic, latex and stuffed animals in sight) which will open to wake up a second cold and aseptic environment inside: a slaughterhouse similar to a cold room in which neon lights, steel, waxed plastic sheets and very white tiles reign.





Theater show, with the possibility of being performed also outside and in unconventional spaces.

- 1 actor + 1 technician

**LENGTH** Full version 1h / short version 40 min

Possibility of different numbers per variety

**LANGUAGE** Visual comedy with no words

**TECHNIQUES** Clown, Buffoon, Puppetry, Magic, Music, Knife Throwing, Pole Dance

**AGE** From 7 years old

**AUDIENCE** Ideal capacity: 150-300 people

**SCENIC SPACE** 8m x 8m x 3,5m / minimum 6m x 6m x 3,5m

**LIGHTS** Provided by the organization

**SOUND** If necessary amplification can be provided by the actor

**ON STAGE** A freestanding pole dance pole + a cart

**SET UP TIME** out of stage 3h / on stage 20 min

**DISASSEMBLY TIME** out of stage 2h / on stage 15 min

- Need to arrive with the camper at the place of the show for loading and unloading
- Parking for a camper is required
- Dressing room with mirror needed

# PARTNERS

**Winnig Project "Orango Bando 2018"**  
COOPERATIVA ITALIANA ARTISTI - Italy

**Prize Emilio Vassalli 2019**  
FESTIVAL CIRCONFERENCE - Italy

## Italy

- C.I.T.A sooc. coop [cita.coop](http://cita.coop)
- Fondazione Cirko Vertigo [www.cirkovertigo.com](http://www.cirkovertigo.com)
- Festival Mirabilia [www.festivalmirabilia.it](http://www.festivalmirabilia.it)
- Bando Move! Piemonte dal Vivo [www.piemontedalvivo.it](http://www.piemontedalvivo.it)
- Stalker [www.stalkerteatro.net](http://www.stalkerteatro.net) - Officine Caos, Torino [www.officinecaos.net](http://www.officinecaos.net)

## Belgium

- Latitude 50 [www.latitude50.be](http://www.latitude50.be)
- La Roseaie [roseraie.org](http://roseraie.org)
- Maison Culturelle d'Ath [www.mcath.be](http://www.mcath.be)

## France

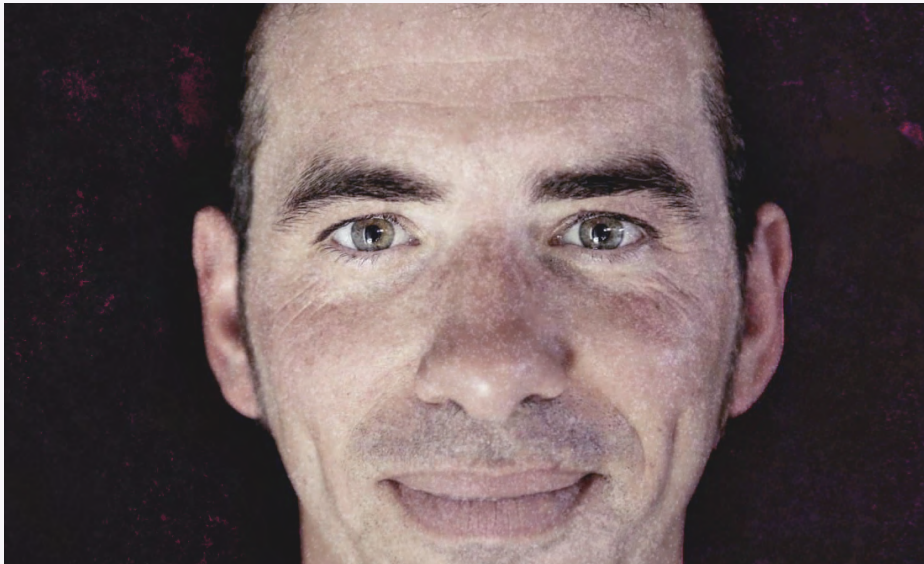
- La Belle Rue Festival [www.labelrue.fr](http://www.labelrue.fr)

## Holland

- Kunsten op Straat, Diepenheim [www.kunstenopstraat.nl](http://www.kunstenopstraat.nl)

**Luigi Ciotta** is a theatre actor, clown, buffoon, street performer and painter. Born in Palermo in 1979, he moved to Bologna in 2000, where he obtained a first-class degree with a dissertation on Medieval Art.

During his university years, he developed a growing passion for theatre, which led him to move to Turin where he studied Circus and Physical Theater at the Performing Art University under the direction of Philip Radice for three years.



Since 2005 he has been performing his original shows worldwide, acting in Italian, French, English and Spanish. In 2009 his show *Funky Pudding* won the Cantieri di Strada "One Man Show" prize organized by FNAS (Federazione Nazionale Artisti di Strada).

In 2014 Luigi Ciotta won the same prize with the show *Sweet Dreams*.

**Current productions on tour:**

*Tutti in Valigia (Everything in a Suitcase), Sweet Dreams, Funky Pudding, Shoeshine, La Nasca, Fresh Market, Abattoir Blues.*

Since 2016 he has been leading clowning workshops all over Europe and beyond.

Abattoir Blues

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